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**TOWN OF GIBRALTAR  
REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING WITH  
CLOSED SESSION PER WIS. STATS. §19.85(1)(e)  
WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 3, 2025, 6:00 PM  
GIBRALTAR TOWN CENTER  
4097 HIGHWAY 42, FISH CREEK, WI 54212**

**Call to order:** Chair Sohns called the regular meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

**Roll call/quorum:** Board members present: Chair Sohns, Supervisor Birmingham, Supervisor Hancock and Supervisor Merkel. Board member(s) absent: Supervisor Selenica, excused.

**Pledge of Allegiance:**

**Adopt agenda:** *Motion (Merkel/Birmingham) to approve the agenda as presented. Carried.*

**Approve minutes of previous meeting(s):** *Motion (Birmingham/Hancock) to approve minutes from November 5, 2025 regular meeting as presented. Carried. Motion (Birmingham/Merkel) to approve Minutes from November 10, 2025 Public Hearing on Budget as presented. Carried. Motion (Merkel/Birmingham) to approve Minutes from November 10, 2025 Special Board Meeting as presented. Carried. Motion (Birmingham/Merkel) to approve Minutes from November 14, 2025 Special Board Meeting as presented. Carried.*

**Parks and Lands:** Buske reported Parks and Lands Committee did not meet in November. She also reported that she hiked Fish Creek Park with Gibraltar High School students, noting potential educational opportunities, particularly with the ecology class. She thanked the volunteers and Town maintenance who helped set up for Hometown Holidays.

**Fire Department/EMR:** Chief Bertges provided a written report. **November Call Volume:** 21, up from 9 in 2024. **Significant events:** House fire on High Plateau Road. **Projects:** Training with Egg Harbor the next couple of weeks. **Events:** Pictures with Santa at Old Town Hall on December 6.

**Police Department:** Chief Roesch reported he responded to the fire on High Plateau Road and attempted to use a fire suppression device.

**VFC:** Schutlz reported they are getting ready for Hometown Holiday. She extended thanks to Kurt and his crew for getting the trees up. After this weekend, visitor center hours will be changing to Friday and Saturday. Plans for Winterfest are in full swing.

**Noble House:** Buske reported they just completed wreath sales. It was a big success. Tree lighting is December 6 at 5:00 p.m. She thanked Kelly and Adrian Murre for donating the tree and all volunteers who helped with tress and decorations.

**Airport:** Drajesk updated Supervisors on hangar construction. He also reported the Door County Highway Department graded and leveled approach area at south end of runway, addressing significant holes that had previously limited safe mowing and maintenance. Thanks to Keith Kocourek who funded the cost of the project. He reported a bid was accepted for the house on the Buehler property, phone/internet contract changes reduced airport phone bill by one-third and DNR nuisance permits were obtained to remove deer and turkey. He advised the courtesy car and bikes are stored for winter and memorial funds were received in memory of Jon Neville, Jim Halbbrook and Marty Franke.

**Watershed:** Merline reported there is not much happening in the creek.

**Plan Commission:** Merline reported the Plan Commission met on Monday and discussed goals for 2026, reviewed 2025 accomplishments and heard a rezoning petition and a tower siting application. New alternate member Barb McKesson was welcomed.

**Harbor Commission:** No report.

**Door County Tourism Zone/Room Tax:** Weddig reported that Destination Door County and Tourism Zone Commission have been meeting to plan for next year. Through September, room

1 tax collections are up about 5% countywide, with Gibraltar up approximately \$120,000. He noted  
2 that available rooms increased slightly while overall occupancy decreased, but average daily  
3 rates—especially for short-term rentals—have risen. He also shared data showing that only about  
4 46% of out-of-state visitors stay overnight in Door County, with many likely lodging in  
5 surrounding areas.

6 **Building Committee:** Committee is meeting December 8 to review walkthroughs.

7 **Door County Coastal Byways:** Reetz reported Committee met November 10 and reviewed and  
8 approved updated grant application for coloring book and brochure reprint projects and will  
9 explore alternative funding sources if grant is not awarded. Next meeting is January 26, 2026 at  
10 9:00 a.m. in Baileys Harbor. Chad Kodanko is Village of Sister Bay representative.

11 **Broadband Report:** No report.

12 **County Board Representative Report:** Supervisor Hancock reported Board has been working  
13 on budget. She noted the November 12 County Board packet includes a listing of each  
14 department's top accomplishments for the year, which is a helpful overview of how County tax  
15 dollars are used. She also highlighted several capital improvement items referenced in packet,  
16 including runway improvements, funding for reconfiguring Sturgeon Bay Library, and public  
17 safety radio upgrade, which is largest capital improvement expenditure for the year.

18 **Clerk Report:** Reetz reported she conducted election inspector training on November 13. There  
19 are a few new inspectors and a few who have retired. Colleen has sent out STR and business license  
20 renewals and she is working on newsletter.

21 **Treasurer Report:** Cain-Bieri reported budget is done and tax bills will be mailed tomorrow. She  
22 created a color-coded "understanding your tax bill" information sheet that is on Town website and  
23 will be in the newsletter.

24 **Administrator:** Thyssen reported winter decorations are up and all vehicles are in winter mode.  
25 He stated recent snow event went well and that equipment is operating smoothly. He reported on  
26 ongoing discussions with County regarding zoning text amendments. He noted the Plan  
27 Commission conducted a thorough line-by-line review and submitted the only municipal response  
28 received by the County's Resource Planning Committee, which was appreciated and taken into  
29 consideration. Chair Sohns asked about the Chambers Island building, and Thyssen reported the  
30 structure is complete but doors will be installed in May.

31 **Chair:** Chair Sohns wished everyone a good Thanksgiving and upcoming Christmas. He reported  
32 he will be traveling to Madison the next morning for a TAC meeting. He noted there is significant  
33 defensive legislation underway, particularly related to elections, and expressed concern about  
34 proposals that would place increased demands on clerks, especially in smaller municipalities. He  
35 also reported that at the federal level, heavier weight limits on highways are being discussed again,  
36 which could create impacts once trucks leave federal highways and transition onto local roads.  
37 Additionally, he noted there is active legislation proposing to allow broadband providers and  
38 telephone companies full access to rights-of-way without municipal or county oversight.

39 **Public Comment:** None.

40 **Approve cleaning contract with ProTouch Commercial Cleaning LLC:** Regina Rudoj owner  
41 of ProTouch was present to answer questions and Supervisors reviewed proposed cleaning  
42 contract. It was agreed that an initial deep cleaning of Noble House and Beach Bathrooms should  
43 be added back into contract. Cain-Bieri noted Airport Commission has not yet approved contact  
44 price for airport bathroom cleaning. Merkel asked about grout cleaning and Rudoj confirmed she  
45 could add that into the cleaning schedule. Cain-Bieri noted the quote is slightly above what was  
46 budgeted but not concerning. *Motion (Sohns/Hancock) to move forward with 2026 Custodial*

1 Services Agreement with ProTouch Commercial Cleaning, adding back in initial deep clean of  
2 Noble House and Beach bathrooms. Carried.

3 **Consideration of appointments to Fish Creek Sanitary District #1 Board of Commissioners:**  
4 Chair Sohns made recommendation. *Motion (Hancock/Merkel) to appoint Dennis Steigenberger*  
5 *to the Fish Creek Sanitary District No. 1 Board of Commissioners for a term expiring September*  
6 *2029 and Bill Weddig for a six year term expiring September 2031 . Carried.*

7 **Consideration of appointment to Parks and Lands Committee:** Chair Sohns made  
8 recommendation. *Motion (Birmingham/Merkel) to appoint Kathy Grawien to the Parks and Lands*  
9 *Committee for a term expiring April 2028. Carried.* Buske took a moment to thank Patty Dixon  
10 for her service on the Parks and Lands Committee.

11 **Consideration of appointments to Plan Commission:** Chair Sohns noted need to have a full  
12 Commission year-round and he made a recommendation. *Motion (Birmingham/Hancock) to*  
13 *appoint John Selenica and Cathy Hoke to the Plan Commission terms expiring December 31,*  
14 *2028. Carried.* Thanks was extended to Tom Blackwood for his years of service.

15 **Award bid West Downtown Reconstruction Phase I:** Thyssen reported bids for West  
16 Downtown Reconstruction Phase I, including Main Street project extension, came in under  
17 projection. WPS provided ballpark estimate of approximately \$100,000 to bury overhead electric  
18 lines while roadway is open. Decorative black poles were estimated at approximately \$25,000  
19 each. Cain-Bieri reported Town has sufficient available funds to support burying electrical utilities  
20 should Board proceed, confirming Town has financial capacity to evaluate the option. Supervisors  
21 discussed benefits of burying utilities, including reducing overhead wire clutter and improving  
22 long-term function. Hancock inquired about frontage wiring by Bayside. Thyssen noted not all  
23 equipment belongs to WPS, but burial would still address part of issue. Thyssen confirmed  
24 coordination with lighting consultants to ensure compatibility with Town lighting system. *Motion*  
25 *(Birmingham/Merkel) to award the West Downtown Reconstruction Phase I project for base bid*  
26 *and alternate bid to Peters Construction Co. in the amount of \$1,106,354.05 and \$94,145.50 and*  
27 *to move forward with pricing for burying. Carried.*

28 **Award Bid for Main Street project extension West Downtown reconstruction Phase I:** See  
29 above.

30 **Consideration of amendments to Northern Door County Boat Rental (NDCBR) agreement:**  
31 Cain-Bieri reviewed the proposed amendments to the lease. She explained agreement has been  
32 updated to reflect authorization for a fourth slip on a trial basis and to ensure the business name  
33 conforms to the company's actual legal name. She also noted that language requiring NDCBR to  
34 provide a safety and instruction handout to all customers has been reinstated back into agreement.  
35 *Motion (Merkel/Hancock) to approve the amended Northern Door County Boat Rental lease as*  
36 *presented. Carried.*

37 **Consideration of approval of Verizon Tower Permit to collate at exiting tower at 3959 State**  
38 **Road 42:** Thyssen explained Verizon is seeking to add to an existing tower and Plan Commission  
39 voted to recommend approval. *Motion (Merkel/Hancock) to approve Verizon tower permit as*  
40 *recommended by the Plan Commission. Carried.*

41 **Consideration of Plan Commission recommendation Deep Stone Lake LLC & Beach Street**  
42 **LLC Rezoning Application # Z-25-1135 (parcels 014-02-34312731E, 014-02-34312734, 014-**  
43 **02-34312743B, 014-02-34312743B2, 014-02-34312734A, 014-02-34312743B4) to rezone from**  
44 **LI to HL 3.5:** Thyssen advised the Plan Commission reviewed the application at its December 1,  
45 2025 meeting. The Commission reviewed the requested zoning change, applicable standards,  
46 proposed land use, surrounding zoning, and compatibility with Town's long-range planning  
47 objectives. Following discussion, Commission voted to recommend support of the rezoning

1 petition. Pete Hurth made presentation to Board. Buske asked about lot size, and Hancock asked  
2 about wetland area. Chair Merline stated Plan Commission was pleased the property will be  
3 reclaimed and put back into use, noting the project supports a goal of the Fish Creek Watershed  
4 Plan. Kathy Grawien asked about walking-path access, and Hancock commented on stormwater  
5 management. *Motion (Birmingham/Merkel) to recommend support to County consistent with the*  
6 *Plan Commission recommendation. Carried.*

7 **Knowles-Nelson grant discussions:** Thyssen reviewed next steps for Knowles–Nelson  
8 Stewardship grant, including project budget, timeline, and area. Supervisors discussed Town  
9 match requirements and possible funding strategies. Board reviewed proposed project map and  
10 asked questions of Eric Hyde from Peninsula State Park. Linda Merline and Laurie Buske  
11 addressed Board. Chair Sohns and Supervisor Hancock asked questions regarding trail alignment,  
12 construction, and maintenance responsibilities. Cain-Bieri summarized Town’s financial position  
13 regarding matching funds and long-term maintenance obligations. Supervisor Hancock expressed  
14 support for trail. Chief Roesch noted trail may reduce traffic conflicts from a public-safety  
15 standpoint. Supervisors reviewed draft Land Use Agreement in detail. It was noted Town cannot  
16 accept grant without a Land Use Agreement in place. Hyde confirmed a Memorandum of  
17 Understanding would not be sufficient because it lacks legal enforceability. Thyssen reported on  
18 number of hours maintenance staff spends on trail maintenance each year. Hyde confirmed the  
19 trail is part of the Park’s Master Plan. Merkel requested a copy of the Master Plan be provided to  
20 Board. Skylar Witalison provided feedback. Supervisors will compile a list of proposed revisions  
21 to the Land Use Agreement for Chair Sohns to review with Hyde. *Motion (Birmingham/Merkel) to*  
22 *accept and proceed with Knowles-Nelson grant. Carried.*

23 **Consideration of Memorandum of Understanding with Peninsula State Park:** Supervisors  
24 reviewed draft Land Use Agreement as part of Knowles-Nelson grant discussions.

25 **Consideration of amendment to Airport Operation and Maintenance Agreement:** Drajesk  
26 reviewed proposed changes to agreement to align with Wisconsin Statutes, current practices and  
27 grant assurances. Cain-Bieri clarified the meaning of financial report in paragraph 6. Hancock  
28 asked for clarification on paragraph 5. Chair Sohns asked for clarification/amendment on pay out  
29 procedures. Treasurer will rework language. *Motion (Sohns/Hancock) to approve the updated*  
30 *Airport Operation and Maintenance Agreement with changes discussed to Depository and Use of*  
31 *Funds language. Carried.*

32 **Consideration of amendment to Airport Operation Ordinance 2008-03:** Drajesk reviewed  
33 proposed changes to ordinance to align with Wisconsin Statutes, current practices and grant  
34 assurances. Supervisors discussed Section IV sub paragraphs in detail. Owner authorization of  
35 leases and commercial agreements was discussed. Hancock asked about the number of commission  
36 members from each municipality. Cain-Bieri asked if lease language and right of first refusals need  
37 to be addressed in ordinance. Supervisors discussed personal property taxes. *Motion*  
38 *(Sohns/Birmingham) to approve the amended Airport Operation Ordinance 2008-03 with addition*  
39 *of right of first refusal language as discussed. Carried.*

40 **Approve 2026–2027 Election Inspectors:** Reetz reviewed statutory process for appointing  
41 election inspectors to two-year terms beginning January 1 of even-numbered years, including  
42 political party nomination rights and majority party requirements. She noted the Democratic Party  
43 submitted one nomination and the Republican Party submitted three and reported that additional  
44 workers have been recruited to replace retiring or less-available inspectors. Reetz recommended  
45 appointment of Chief Inspectors Barb Merkel, Sara Lancaster, and Patty Chomeau Republican  
46 party nominee, and election inspectors Theresa Cain-Bieri, Rachel Stollenwerk, Lynn Mercurio,  
47 Karen Wilson, Sarah Martin, Greg Cote, Lorna Cote, Kathy Diltz, Patsy Reichert (Republican

1 Party nominee, Molly Newman Republican Party nominee and James Wilber Democratic Party  
2 nominee, with the understanding that Lorna, James, and Molly must complete training before  
3 working a scheduled shift. *Motion (Birmingham/Hancock) to appoint the 2026–2027 election*  
4 *inspectors as presented. Carried.*

5 **Approve 2026 Office Schedule:** Cain-Bieri suggested moving November meeting to same date  
6 as budget hearing *Motion (Merkel/Hancock) to approve the 2026 office schedule as presented.*  
7 *Carried.*

8 **Renewal – Intergovernmental agreement with County regarding repair of highways:** *Motion*  
9 *(Sohns/Hancock) to approve the 2026–2027 Intergovernmental Agreement with the Door County*  
10 *Highway Department. Carried.*

11 **Approval of Building Inspector fee schedule:** *Motion (Birmingham/Hancock) to adopt the 2026*  
12 *Building Inspector fee schedule as presented. Carried.*

13 **Payment of Accounts:** *Motion (Birmingham/Hancock ) to approve payment of bills. Carried.*

14 **Adjourn to closed session according to Wisconsin State Statutes 19.85(1)(e):** *Motion*  
15 *(Hancock/Birmingham) to adjourn to closed session at 8:39 p.m. via roll call vote. Birmingham*  
16 *aye, Sohn's aye, Hancock aye, Merkel aye. Carried.*

17 *(e) Deliberating or negotiating the purchasing of public properties, the investing*  
18 *of public funds, or conducting other specified public business, whenever*  
19 *competitive or bargaining reasons require a closed session: airport land*  
20 *acquisition.*

21 **Reconvene to open session pursuant to State Statute 19.85(2) to take any action(s) or adopt**  
22 **resolution(s) on issues discussed in closed session:** *Motion (Merkel/Birmingham) to reconvene*  
23 *to open session at 9:25 p.m. Carried.*

24 **Approve action(s) taken in closed session:** *Motion (Birmingham/Merkel) to move forward with*  
25 *airport land acquisition as discussed in closed session.*

26 **Adjourn:** *Motion (Birmingham/Hancock ) to adjourn at 9:27 p.m. Carried.*

27  
28 Respectfully submitted,

29  
30 Laura Reetz, Clerk